

Maple Leaf remains the favorite gold coin

By Roger Boye

Canada's Maple Leaf remained the world's most popular gold coin in 1988 with sales of 1.2 million troy ounces, more than double Uncle Sam's American Eagle, according to recently released figures.

Experts say that more and more gold investors are buying the Maple Leaf—rather than the Eagle—because they prefer its .999 fine gold purity.

Gold sales worldwide last year dropped from 1987 levels. In 1987, investors bought 1.4 million troy ounces of Maple Leafs and 1.25 million ounces of Eagles.



Nearly 300 lawmakers in Washington are co-sponsoring proposals to put new designs on circulating coinage, which supporters say all but assures passage of the legislation.

"It's too early to celebrate, but coin redesign should be on the president's desk by mid-summer," said Diane Wolf, a member of the U. S. Commission of Fine Arts and leading advocate for new coin designs. "We've got a majority in both houses [of Congress] and on both banking committees."

The legislation would require that over six years the U. S. Treasury put new designs—each symbolizing basic freedoms guaranteed in the Bill of Rights—on the tails sides of the five circulating coin types, cent through half dollar. Officials also would be asked to give the five heads-side designs

a facelift.

As of May 11, at least 60 of the 100 senators and 236 of 435 House members were co-sponsoring coin-design bills. Similar legislation passed the Senate last year but later died when it failed to clear the House.



A new series of U. S. currency could be in production by year's end if the U. S. Senate confirms President Bush's nominee for treasurer of the United States, Catalina Vasquez Villalpando.

The treasurer's facsimile signature is one of two that appears on U. S. paper money, and under current Treasury practice, the government adds a letter after the series year with each change of treasurer. Series 1988 money now being printed with the signatures of Treasury secretary Nicholas F. Brady and outgoing treasurer Katherine Davalos Ortega presumably would become 1988A.

The treasurer oversees the United States Mint, Bureau of Engraving and Printing and the U. S. Savings Bond program.